

Dear Mr. Powell And FCC Board Members,

I come to you as someone who has seen many sides to the shrinking diversity and increasing lack of availability of the music that reflects the diversity of the rich contemporary musical cultures, historic perspectives and overall receptivity to much music that is great, both new and traditional in favor of the music deemed "commercially acceptable" promoted by the conservative corporate interests.

The public's First Amendment rights regarding "the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources" has all but been wiped out by radio corporation gluttons that have swooped down and are allowed to own upwards of 1,200 radio stations as is the case of just one company. Regional diversity on radio and local access and input to local stations is fast disappearing adding to the further homogenization of our culture.

I am a folk musician, performing songwriter (with four recordings on CD that include many selections that have received national and international airplay) and folk music DJ. I have been artist in residence for the state of NM, a teacher of musical instruments, booker/promoter for two coffeehouses, founding organizer of a traditional and bluegrass festival and folk music buyer for record stores.

What I see in all of these roles is a real need for access now denied to all of these forms of music that reflect our cultural greatness. I have students who have no idea of the roots of American or world music nor of the diversity of the new music that should be available to them.

Newer artists are being robbed of any opportunity to get their music out to a public who upon hearing the music would love it. Corporate America is now dictating what is made available to us and we're the sorrier for it.

One of the greatest crimes against culture in this country is the Telecommunications Act of 1996 which erased limits on the number of radio stations a single entity could own, trampling on our First Amendment right to diversity through the airwaves.